



"Macalester is alive, it's a part of this world and it's a part of the intellectual ferment of our community and our country."

Walter F. Mondale,
Former Vice President and Ambassador to Japan,
attorney, Minneapolis, Minn.
Macalester College, Class of 1950

"Today I have become an instrument of social responsibility, as Macalester was for me 30 years ago. I have reached out beyond my comfortable American confines to focus on living and investing in emerging nations."

Cecil Callahan
Founding Partner, Goodworks International; Chairman, Sub-Saharan Africa Investment Lab, Cape Town, South Africa
Macalester College, Class of 1976



BEYOND THE CAMPUS WALLS

"Mac has always motivated its students to go out and work in the world beyond these campus walls."

Kofi A. Annan
U.N. Secretary-General
Macalester College, Class of 1961

"At Macalester, we learned to be engaged with the issues of the day — and to take on civic and social responsibilities."

Timothy A. Hultquist
Advisory Director, Morgan Stanley & Co., Inc., New York
Macalester College, Class of 1972



At Macalester College, civic engagement is the way we do business. Listen to our alumni...



"Quite simply, the Macalester experience elicits the whys in addition to the how-tos. It's a passionate exercise in personal and civic responsibility."

Ruth Stricker-Dayton,
Executive Director, Owner, The Marsh, a health and wellness center in Minnetonka, Minn.
Macalester College, Class of 1957

"Macalester teaches global context, interconnection and interdependence, and how to make a positive difference."

David Bell
Vice Chairman, The Interpublic Group of Companies, Inc., New York City
Macalester College, Class of 1965



Civic and Social Engagement. Now More Than Ever.

— A message from Michael S. McPherson, President of Macalester College —

The recent round of corporate scandals reminds us, if we needed reminding, that some prominent business leaders have failed to understand that business success is not just a matter of private gain, but has important elements of civic and social responsibility as well. We must ask whether we educators share in this failure. Have we failed to impart an adequate understanding of the social and civic responsibilities that must accompany leadership in business and in other aspects of life? I fear that the answer is yes, and, further, that this failure is part of a larger failure in American higher education to build education for civic and social responsibility into the basic college curriculum.

Adam Smith, that great proponent of markets and self-interest, never forgot that the invisible hand works only when people operate within the rules; no invisible hand directs the jewel thief or the crooked accountant to socially desirable ends. Nor can the police or the SEC enforcement division, necessary as they are, do the whole job of making people obey the rules. A society in which no one felt an internal compulsion against breaking the rules, one in which people lacked what Smith called "the still small spark of conscience," would need an impossibly large police force.

Smith, a moral philosopher as well as an architect of the study we now know as economics, gave great attention to understanding how the social environment shaped this indispensable moral sense. The case he made for government provision of basic education for all rested largely on its role in promoting moral and civic development.

Basic education may have done the trick in Smith's day, and it remains essential. Certainly nobody would expect a college to instill basic moral values in young adults who arrive bereft of them. But in a complex postindustrial society, the responsibilities of citizenship and of professional life—including business life—demand more sophisticated understandings than was true in Smith's day. The more technical aspects of business or legal or medical ethics need to be addressed in professional schools. But just as undergraduate education provides the grounding for advanced studies in these areas, so should it equip students to grasp and to act on the civic and social responsibilities



that will accompany their professional and their personal lives.

The issue here is not to indoctrinate students in particular moral or political beliefs. Rather, we want to increase students' awareness of the moral values at stake in their personal and professional choices, equip them with the skills they need to reason well and to weigh evidence in executing their civic and social responsibilities, and help them to learn to act effectively in fulfilling their responsibilities.

Every part of a modern college curriculum can be designed to contribute to education for active and responsible citizenship. Whether through learning how to weigh quantitative or scientific evidence about public policy, or through cultivating empathic understanding through the study of art and literature, or through learning the arts of civil discourse, students' classroom work can strengthen their moral and civic capacities. With careful planning and community participation, colleges can also offer opportunities for great civic learning experiences outside the classroom, through internships, research on community problems and service learning courses.

This kind of education can help all of our students learn to live more valuable and fulfilling lives. For those who pursue corporate careers, it will help them put the quest for personal gain in the context of the larger social and civic aims of corporate leadership, recognizing their responsibilities not only to stockholders but to society at large. And those who become corporate directors will know how to ask the right questions and press for clear answers about corporate practices—as the directors involved in the current scandals have so conspicuously failed to do.

It would of course be absurd to claim that any college education can provide a guarantee against fraud or malfeasance. Nonetheless, a determined effort by colleges and universities to promote civic and social responsibility among their students could do much to improve the quality of civic life in America, and to make demoralizing scandals like those we are living through less likely.